Speaker 1: Step Five in Patient Journey Analysis is Incorporate the Voice of the Customer.

Speaker 1: This could be seen as the most critical step in the patient journey exercise, because it helps you understand the motivations of the patient behind the actual data. Let's join Lou to learn more about the data that goes into better understanding the voice of the customer.

Lou: How many analyses do we do where we actually get to speak to the customer or patient directly? Or gain any real insight from their experiences in order to support better decision-making?

Lou: Healthcare is a unique market, in that life sciences companies don't typically have direct access to the ultimate customers that they are serving: the patient. We have direct-to-consumer advertising and web registries, and social media continues to grow and evolve.

Lou: But even with all those mechanisms, the ultimate decision-maker is still heavily influenced by other stakeholders when it comes to treatment decisions. Providers have to recommend or prescribe the products, and payers must enable access to them through their coverage decisions.

Lou: It's not like consumer packaged goods or automobiles, where a consumer can interact directly with the product. Where they are the ultimate decision-maker, and while there may be some influence from a small group of outsiders, they make the final decision.

Lou: In our case, the final decision is made within a more constrained set of parameters. So how do we incorporate the voice of the customer? The traditional methods of primary market research remain very valid today. The challenge is building a consistent process of collecting that data and acting upon it.

Lou: Social media data continues to grow in volume and use, and we continue to get better at developing models to collect, validate, and analyze, and transform the data into usable insights. In this case, it's the sheer volume of the data and sources that must be tamed in order to achieve significant value.

Lou: There are examples today. There are a number of physician sites where ratings are collected from patients and then synthesized into scores for prospective patients to review and leverage when looking to select a new physician. Some payer sites also either incorporate this information, or add their own homegrown versions.

Lou: You can usually find patient experiences on blogs and advocacy websites for certain diseases, along ratings of medications. This can be a very powerful explanatory set of information, when coupled with traditional secondary data sources, such as claims and EHR data, when conducting patient journey analysis.

Lou: However, think back to what patient journey really is. There are typically two key areas where we lack a great deal of insight into the patient journey, and need the voice of the customer to complete the analysis.

Lou: First, in the upfront decision-making process. How do patients reach the point of engaging with the healthcare system? What resources do they leverage? Who do they speak with? What research do they conduct? Who do they trust for advice? This is essential to understanding how the patient journey starts, could be influential on how the patient will work to manage the disease.

Lou: Many companies like Amazon and Google leverage analytics on your past behaviors to recommend products for future purpose. While vastly underdeveloped relative to those marketplaces, the same can be done with healthcare.

Lou: I worked with a team to develop an adherence prediction model a number of years ago that was based upon past adherence experiences for the same patient. That is, if you are typically adherent in the use of other medications, will you be adherent with the next one?

Lou: The simple answer is yes. But we often overlook that aspect of the patient experience and journey when we conduct analytics, and tend to focus on the immediate business needs, often to the detriment of the insights that could be generated.

Lou: The second area is the patient's perspective on outcomes. I spoke a bit of this in a podcast on embedding patient journey analytics in your organization. Ultimately, what was their experience? Do they have a high degree of satisfaction? Would they recommend to others? Do they have any residual issues?

Lou: Ultimately, it's the patient's perspective of the experience that matters. Is their diabetes in control? Is their cancer in remission? Their psoriasis cleared up? Was it cost-effective? That's what matters from a patient's perspective.

Lou: Many organizations today are already doing some level of market research and social media analyses. The problem is they tend to be stand-alone analytics. We would suggest looking to combine these analyses with traditional data sources to develop the most impactful patient journey analytics.

Lou: Obviously, depending on the type of organization and data use rights, this can be easy, because you own the customer relationship and have direct access to the data. Or a bit more difficult, because you are licensing the rights to data for your analysis.

Lou: Your analytic framework needs to be somewhat fluid. For those of you licensing data, think about meta-analyses, or requerying or altering your social media data streams, patient-reported outcomes, or primary research based upon the results of secondary data analysis.

Lou: Patient journey analytics are incomplete without the voice of the customer or patient. Build in their voice to gain the full perspective and drive more meaningful business decisions.